



HAMAGEN

THE MAGAZINE OF THE MAGEN AVOT COMMUNITY



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From the Desk of the Editor Looking to the Future Julian Pollard

In the last year this community has shared, with the wider community, the sad loss of valued and popular members. We remember them and the grief of their families. Many others have survived the virus. We have largely sheltered at home, been bombarded by daily news of doom-laden Government statistics and been faced with restricted Shul services.

But although we never thought our lives would still be dominated by Coronavirus, we can be cautiously optimistic. We believe the next year will see significant protection for most at home and –in due time- abroad so that illness and bereavement will fall away, and family ties can be re-established. So many of us have been unable to celebrate simchas both here and abroad as we might have hoped.

Despite this, these last months have continued to witness the extraordinary efforts made by our Members – notably led by Rabbi Kenigsberg and Rebbetzen Sarah - to engage with each other and the wider community. On-line shiurim and Zoomed conferences have continued unabated as shul services resumed in March.

The outreach efforts of our Chessed Committee in offering comfort and support to those who were vulnerable and lonely has proved to be even more important and their efforts are truly appreciated. Pesach was again a slightly surreal time, but Magen Avot ensured welcome packs were hand delivered to every family. The Yomim Noraim services were conducted with dignity and meaning within the confines of government restrictions and the Chairman, Gabbaim and Council are to be congratulated. As the Chairman's Message highlights the community enjoyed many shared experiences despite physical separation. Indeed, in many ways we became more connected the more we were apart.

Magen Avot will shortly spearhead a major on-line Conference to focus on the plight of the Uyghur Muslims and several important high-profile contributors will join us. Details appear in this magazine and we continue to focus on the talents of our members- so many rare and diverse skills!

My continued thanks to our contributors and those on the Editorial Committee whose efforts enabled us to compile this Edition. Special thanks this time to Linda Wolffe for her contributions and to Raffi Maurer again for his design and layout expertise. And we are very grateful to Alpha Wealth Management who have generously sponsored this Edition.

This remains your Magazine. With your continued involvement and support it will flourish.

Julian Pollard - Editor



Shavuot Message from the Rabbi Rabbi Kenigsberg

Once again, the count is complete.

For the past 7 weeks we have inched our way forward, counting 49 days, ultimately culminating in the auspicious day which marks the giving of the Torah.

Or does it?

Shavuot is synonymous with “zman matan Torateinu” – the time of the giving of our Torah. This is the name by which our Sages referred to it, and it is also the name by which we call it in our tefillot. Yet in the verses of the written Torah relating to Chag HaShavuot, even the slightest mention of receiving the Torah on this day is conspicuously absent. Why?

The question is phrased succinctly by the 15th century Spanish commentator Rav Yitzchak Arama (known by the title of his work – Akeidat Yitzchak):

“And here there is a very difficult question: Why did the Torah not explicitly state that this day of Chag HaShavuot should be a remembrance and commemoration of the Divine giving of the Torah and it's reception, as is clear from our customs and the customs of our forefathers in the wording of our prayers (“This festival of Shavuot, the time of the giving of our Torah”)?”¹

The omission is so striking that the Abarbanel argues that in fact Shavuot is not a celebration of the giving of the Torah at all! Rather, he suggests, it is simply “Chag HaKatsir”, a festival to give thanks to Hashem at the beginning of the harvest.

However, as evident from many sources in Chazal², the day of Shavuot is indeed associated with Matan Torah. The Kli Yakar (Rav Shlomo Ephraim Luntschitz, 17th century Prague) finds an allusion in the fact that the offering of Shavuot is called a “מנחה חדשה” – a new offering – to the statement of Chazal that words of Torah “בכל יום” – “היו בעיניך חדשים” – should appear as fresh and new to us each and every day. The receiving of the Torah is not limited to one day a year, rather it is a constant component of our daily endeavours.

In a similar vein we can understand why the mitzvot of leket and pe'ah - agricultural gifts to the poor - are mentioned in the middle of the section of Parshat Emor dealing with the festivals, and specifically juxtaposed to the Chag of Shavuot. Torah belongs not just in the shul or study hall, but beyond their walls in the workplace too. If the Torah's instructions are still at the forefront of our minds at the end of a long, hard day (in the field or elsewhere) then we will know we have succeeded.

The past year has been one of unique challenges, yet despite it all Magen Avot has continued to grow. In many ways the community has emerged as more close-knit than ever before. The remarkable success of the 3-T project and countless other initiatives, even when shul was closed, has been down to the hard work, dedication and care of members of the kehilla. It has been wonderful to reopen in recent weeks and I look forward to seeing many more familiar faces back in shul over the weeks and months ahead.

Wishing you all Chag Sameach!

Rabbi Kenigsberg

¹ Akeidat Yitzchak, Vayikra, Sha'ar 67

² See for example Pesachim 68b which refers to Shavuot as “the day on which the Torah was given”.



Reflections from our Chair Simon Bentley

Welcome everyone and Chag Sameach. As we approach Shavuot, there is a growing confidence we are moving in the right direction. We continue to adhere to the United Synagogue guidelines on the restrictions that need to be in place, and more members now feel safe, and are returning to Shul for davening. We can all be hopeful for better times ahead.

The programme of Magen Avot events in the last year has been incredible, with more to come. I won't attempt to cover everything, but they have included, the Bat Mitzvah Programme, a weekly Chabura led by members, weekly shiurim, Y@MA, virtual museum tours, the Magen Avot TED circle, Horim veYeladim, Communal Zoom Havdala, 'Meet MA' interviews of members, MA Women's group events, pre-Yom Tov home delivered gifts to all members, The 3T project, Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha'atzmaut events. Huge thanks to everyone involved in organising the davening, sponsoring pre-Chag gifts, creating the weekly newsletter, participating in Zoom events, and ensuring Chesed activities are highlighted.

A classic question we ask, based on the fixed time period between Pesach and Shavuot, is: Why Shavuot is celebrated here as a two-day Yom Tov? It clearly states in the Torah that Shavuot comes after counting 49 days starting on "the morrow after the Sabbath," which the Gemara explains is the day after the first day of Pesach. Since everyone knows the date of the first day of Pesach (even in the olden days, the news regarding the exact date of Rosh Chodesh Nissan would have reached everywhere by the time Shavuot arrived), what need is there to celebrate Shavuot for two days?

To answer this question, we must first explain how the Jewish calendar works today and how it used to work before Matan Torah. Nowadays, every day in the calendar starts at night. Rav Pinchus HaLevi Hurowitz (who lived nearly 300 years ago and was a Rabbi where my father was born, in Frankfurt am Main) suggests that the source for how we organise the Jewish calendar is in Emor.

מֵעֶרֶב עַד-עֶרֶב תִּשְׁבְּתוּ שַׁבְּתֵכֶם "From evening to evening you will celebrate your Shabbat." This pasuk, which places evening before morning, concerns the observance of Yom Kippur. It is a specific imperative detailing the actual time parameters of the holiday. Rav Hurowitz, however, argues that before Matan Torah the Jewish calendar operated on the assumption that morning is the beginning of the day. Rav Yaakov Kaminetsky, known affectionately as Reb Yaakov, who along with Rabbi Moshe Feinstein led American Jewry in issues of halachic and spiritual guidance until 1986 when both men passed away, offers proof for this thesis.

It is a well-known tradition that Avraham Avinu established Shacharit, Yitzchak established Mincha, and Ya'akov established Ma'ariv. If the Jewish day starts at night, though, we expect Avraham, as the first of the Avot, to have established Ma'ariv, not Shacharit! The fact that he established Shacharit indicates that the Jewish day used to start in the morning. The pasuk in Tehilim (92), "L'hagid baboker chasdecha v'emunatcha balaylot," which places morning before night, indicates the same thing. (This is from a psalm that predates Matan Torah.)

Now that we understand that the Jewish calendar used to operate differently, we can explain, based on the understanding of the Chatam Sofer, why we celebrate Shavuot for two days.

Nowadays, we start counting Omer on the evening following the first day of Pesach, but before Matan Torah we started counting the following morning.

In other words, the 50th day used to start later (the next morning) and end later. To celebrate Shavuot according to both Jewish calendars (pre - and post - Matan Torah) and to symbolically remember the change that took place on Matan Torah, we celebrate Shavuot for two days.

חג שבועות שמח
Simon



Eshet Chayil 5781 Karina Katz An Average Day



An average day begins at 6.30am. At 7.15am I've grabbed a cup of coffee and I'm in the car driving Minna to her school coach stop in Mill Hill Broadway. Pre-Covid I would be in the swimming pool at 8.00am but this year I've been substituting my daily swim with daily walks and/or an online session with a personal trainer at various times of the day. The great thing about these walks is that they have doubled up as social opportunities. It's been a lifeline to meet up with friends on a regular basis during the course of the year. One close friend lives in Silver Spring, Maryland. She calls me after she's finished her school run (around 1pm GMT) and we have a virtual walk and talk. I lived away from London for ten years before I met Ashley; first in Israel, then at university in Manchester, back to Jerusalem and finally a short stint in Passaic, New Jersey. Living away from home and sharing accommodation and life changing experiences are the years when you form the best and deepest friendships. Covid provided the opportunity and the impetus to connect on a more frequent basis with the women who have had the most profound impact on my life. Regular calls and messages to friends in Vancouver, Silver Spring, St Louis, New York, Manchester and Ramat Bet Shemesh were revelatory in that so many of our challenges, experiences and emotions, exacerbated or highlighted by Covid, were in fact universal. This has been incredibly reassuring.

Mid-morning I may have some Cheshed related activity to accomplish. I have been volunteering for GIFT for the last few years, primarily delivering bags of groceries. Pre-Covid this was simply a case of drop and go but this year I have had elderly recipients for whom the weekly delivery is not just a means of receiving vital food supplies but also a lifeline in terms of relieving the isolation of the week. Chatting on the doorstep, checking up on how they are feeling and in one instance, chasing up a vaccination for an 85 year old home bound lady has given shape and meaning to the year.

On an average day I would also visit my parents. As they have aged this has become increasingly important and having to sacrifice these visits has been painful. At this stage in their lives every day is precious; daily phone calls and text messages are no substitute for spending quality time with them and I am anxiously looking forward to resuming these visits. In a similar vein I very much miss my brother and his family in New York. It is with eager anticipation that we wait to resume our regular trips to the US and Israel so that we can finally catch up with family and our close friends.

I spend much of the day in my art room. Painting has taken me in a new direction after years of teaching English. I am still unsure where this journey will end but it has been wonderfully therapeutic during these last months; a way to block out all concerns and distractions. After my Combined Studies degree (English and History), I trained for a PGCE at the Institute of Education and obtained a TEFL qualification from International House, London. In Israel I taught bilingual children in specialist school programmes and worked at the British Council language school in Tel Aviv. In London I have taught at several Jewish secondary schools but in recent years I moved away from classroom teaching and tutored privately at home and for Gateways at JW3. Gateways is an educational and vocational provision that supports vulnerable young people and those experiencing mental health challenges within the Jewish community. It is rewarding to see failing and excluded students achieve GCSE qualifications and my last student, a school refuser, remarkably achieved 100% in her English Functional Skills exam which was a fantastic way to end my time there. I made the decision to leave Gateways and teaching in general, just as Covid hit.

At 8pm I may have a Jewish studies class. I am a particular fan of the courses run by LSJS and I refuse to miss any course taught by Debbie Meyer. Debbie explores different characters from Tenach in depth and I am always dazzled by her range of sources. Her style is reminiscent of the classes I took in Israel where I spent 18 months at Midreshet Rachel, an affiliate institution of the Shappell's/Darche Noam yeshiva where Ashley studied. The Darche Noam yeshiva is a family and there exists between staff and students, past and present, a very firm bond. Over the years various rebbeim have stayed in our home and we have hosted countless alumni events. Having this "family" in the background provided additional strength during Covid; Rabbi Karlinsky, co-founder and rosh yeshiva has remained in regular contact, chatting to us on Zoom, sending emails and providing wonderful advice and support. I believe the foundation the yeshiva has provided us has helped root us as a family and given us a strong sense of purpose and direction.

Around 11pm, before going to sleep I will catch up with Ashley. His job is hectic and all-consuming but we feel blessed to have each other as well as our children, Joey and Minna. Ashley is South African. My mother is from Zimbabwe and my grandparents moved from Bulawayo to Durban when I was a child. Following our marriage Ashley and I lived in Johannesburg (where my father's mother lived) and Joey was born in Sandton. Now we are based in Hendon but I hope that we bring our varied experiences and deep connections to other countries and cultures to our life here and to Magen Avot.

We feel extremely proud of how Magen Avot has evolved. It was an exciting undertaking for us as a family and we hope our contribution has been of value to the community. We lived and breathed Magen Avot from its inception and we are so proud of the fact that new faces and energies have emerged as old ones have naturally stepped away; proof that Magen Avot is on its own trajectory albeit with the vision of its original founders. It is heartening to witness it flourishing under the leadership of our wonderful Rabbi and Sarah Kenigsberg and the fantastic leadership team.



Eco-Synagogue Initiative

Fiona Taylor Tammy Beider

One day Honi (the Circle Maker) was traveling on the main road and saw a man planting a carob tree. He asked him, "How long does it take for a carob tree to bear fruit?" The man replied, "seventy years." Honi asked, "are you certain that you will live another seventy years?" The man answered, "I found carob trees in the world. As my forefathers planted them for me, so I too plant these for my children". Talmud Bavli, Taanit 23a.

We have a duty to look after the world for future generations. This story, brought by Rabbi Sacks in his essays on environmental ethics show us what our rabbis thought about how we, living now, have an imperative to maintain the earth so that our children will be able to enjoy it as we have.

In Bereshit chapter 2, verse 15, Hashem makes Adam the custodian of the Earth. The Hebrew words used are le'ovdah, to serve and leshmorah to guard. Rabbi Sacks points out that the world leshmorah is used to describe the responsibilities of someone who is guarding property that does not belong to them. We cannot be negligent with this property. The earth was created by Hashem and we were gifted the right to use its bounty for our benefit, but it does not belong to us. We must guard it for Him and for future generations, this can be achieved through our individual endeavours as well as communally, nationally and globally.

Caring about our environment and ecology is a problem that has taken a long time to filter into Jewish mainstream thought. It is easier to debate the kashrut of marmite than to recognise the uncomfortable truth that our Jewish lifestyles can promote waste, overconsumption, and some very tricky ethical issues. And we are not even talking about our treatment of the animals that we eat or derive food products from.

We try to live meaningfully, we try and do mitzvot, give Tzedakah, belong to a community, do acts of chessed. As humans we make, nurture and sustain relationships with others and Hashem. Perhaps it is not such a big jump to try and nurture our relationship with the Earth, be aware of what we are doing to the environment and see if we can take some small steps to "greener living".

We meet communally on Shabbat. Shabbat is our day of rest but it is also the day where we don't leave our footprint on the environment around us, we cannot change the state of the world around us or manipulate it to aid our own purpose, everything is left to rest. This idea of rest is also seen in the Shmita and Yovel years where we allow the land to rest. We have the wisdom in our teachings that show us how we cannot endlessly plunder the earth, as if we do not let it rest it will no longer bear us its fruits. If we over exploit the environment in the short term to meet our needs then we know we will, in the long term, be left with nothing. We as a community have decided to take the step to join EcoSynagogue, which shows our commitment to nurturing conservationism as part of our moral outlook.

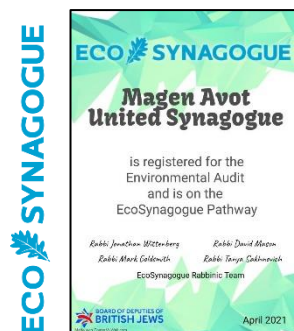
EcoSynagogue is a cross communal organisation in partnership with the Board of Deputies led by four Rabbis, to promote environmental sustainability and engagement across the Jewish Community. EcoSynagogue's primary aim is to engage all Synagogues to register for, and participate in The Environmental Audit, which is a detailed survey of how our shul community engages with the environment.

The Environment Audit looks at 5 areas:

1. Community (Synagogue) Management commitment to this pathway.
2. Prayer & Teaching
3. Lifestyle
4. Land, Buildings & Consumables
5. Community & Global Engagement.

We fill in the audit, get a score and then look at ways to improve that score and be rewarded with a Bronze, Silver and ultimately Gold EcoSynagogue Award.

At Magen Avot, we have a brand-new Eco-committee! We have registered for the Audit and we have started work on our "Environmentally friendly and energy efficient resolution". The areas we want to work on are energy saving, waste saving, education, advocacy on environmental issues, and potentially becoming a fair-trade synagogue. If anyone is interested in becoming part of our committee, please let us know (details will be circulated by newsletter).





A Life in the Day of... Barak Seener Geo-Political Risk Consultant

Our community is blessed with an extraordinary range of talented and unusually qualified members. For those readers who were unable to attend the excellent recent MEET MA Zoom session featuring our own Barak Seener, we decided to feature him in this Edition.

Barak is the founder of Strategic Intelligientia that provides geopolitical risk assessments. Previously, Barak was a Global Intelligence Manager at HSBC and the Middle East Director at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) on whose behalf he has debriefed international defence and security policy makers and diplomats on matters relating to Middle East security.

Barak has lectured at NATO as well as the Royal College for Defence Studies. He also staged the world's first, and hugely successful conference in London at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) on Palestinian statehood. This examined the security implications for the Region bringing together leading Israelis, Palestinians, US and European representatives in London 2011.

Prior to joining RUSI, Barak was one of the Henry Jackson Society's founders in Westminster and was the Henry Jackson Society's Greater Middle East Section Director. Barak published a book in 2018 entitled, 'Commercial Risks Entering the Iranian Market: Why sanctions make investment in the Islamic Republic of Iran a high-risk proposition.'

Barak has published and provided analysis and expert commentary for a range of international broadcasters including Newsweek, Al-Jazeera, BBC, CNN, Chinese CCTV, Fox News, Sky News, Voice of America, and news outlets such as Bloomberg, Reuters, Associated Press, the Evening Standard, Jerusalem Post and Xinhua.

Barak has published in journals including The National Interest, The American Interest, Middle East Quarterly, Jane's Intelligence Review and Jane's Islamic Affairs Analyst, RUSI Newsbrief and Infocus on counter-terrorism, US-China dynamics, risks to supply chains, globalization and the end of the liberal international order, transatlantic relations, universal jurisdiction, nuclear proliferation and Middle East issues including the Arab Spring, tensions in Libya, Egypt and Syria, strategic and security dynamic between Iran and the Gulf, and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Q: Barak, let me take you back some 9 years. In 2012 you debated at the Cambridge Union that "This House believes the Arab Spring is a threat to global stability". Did this demonstrate both your passion for middle East politics and your prescience about what was to come in the decade that followed?

A: Already at that time I did not focus on Middle East politics vis a vis the region, but recognized the impact that Globalization had upon it and in turn, its security implications for the West. At the time, however it was more attractive to view this as a democratic revolution that would transform the Middle East for the best. By maintaining a geopolitical perspective, I reached a radically different conclusion and was a minority position that ultimately proved correct. The 2007 financial crisis led to an increase in the price of foodstuff exported from China to the region and in turn, state failure and vacuums of governance coupled with economic crisis that emerged across the region led to ethnic tensions and a surge of radicalisation. If nationalism and ideology had failed to maintain stability, religion would be the alternative to fill the void. This was exploited by Iran that sought to extend its sphere of influence that was accompanied by Russia entering the fray. This culminated in humanitarian crisis and huge demographic shifts that spilled over to a refugee crisis that Europe had to absorb.



A Life in the Day of... Barak Seener Geo-Political Risk Consultant

Q: Your educational path is revealing. Your first degree was in History and Politics at Queen Mary, University of London, then you studied for an MSc in International Security and Global Governance at Birkbeck College and then certified for International Relations and Political Economy at the LSE. To cap that you are certified business continuity consultant from the Institute of Business Continuity. How did these studies prepare you for the real world of politics and risk assessment? In short Barak, please tell us what Strategic Intelligentia does.

A: Strategic Intelligentia enables governments, organisations and corporations to mitigate risk and identify opportunities. One prime objective is to assess political trends and then stress test business activities in unfamiliar terrain where unusual or unexpected risk factors may arise.

Q: How do you go about gaining proprietary analysis of events on the ground?

A: Investors and business must navigate a geopolitically volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) landscape where increasingly disruptions are becoming the norm. Strategic Intelligentia utilizes an interdisciplinary approach to assess and predict transnational trends that brings together a team of experts in policy analysis, economics, security, communications and geopolitical analysis to take a multidimensional approach to political risk. Strategic Intelligentia's multi-dimensional risk assessments are conducted through the integrated angles of policy, security regulatory landscape, history, culture, ideology and religion that together impact on the security, economy, commercial activities and infrastructure development of the region. This serves as a lens that connects the dots between seemingly random and disparate events in different areas which are at a deeper level are connected and constitute transnational trends that impact upon different sectors. This enables Strategic Intelligentia to make deeper and more insightful predictions on country, regional and global risk. This is in contrast to the two-dimensional approach that assesses a single country's risk or arbitrarily quantifies risk demonstrated by artificial indices.

Q: And the risks are presumably changing constantly.

A: Very much so. We will identify future risks and opportunities and translate this into business value that proactively anticipates geopolitical shifts. Our team will forecast a couple of steps ahead to enhance investment strategies, business efficiency and resilience. Our retained and external team of experts monitor political, economic, social and security developments and their impact on various industries. They also examine cross-border issues such as business, finance, trade and supply chains, infrastructure, technology, energy, commodities, financial regulation, climate change and global health.



A Life in the Day of... Barak Seener Geo-Political Risk Consultant

Q: We deal elsewhere in this Edition with the forthcoming Magen Avot Conference in support of the Uyghur Muslims. You have been active in promoting and developing that programme and the distinguished speakers we are hosting. Was this passion stirred by your work in geopolitical risk assessment or something more? Is China its internal structure and its external relationship with the outside world a special interest to you?

A: There are two levels for my motives in supporting the Uyghur Muslims. At a fundamental level, in recent history Jews were subjected to the unique form of industrialised genocide – the Holocaust. The lesson of 'Never Again' is not that Jewish people should merely be acutely sensitive and forcefully respond to potential threats the Jewish people face e.g. Iranian nuclear weapons that could lead to a poly-nuclear Middle East and an umbrella for terrorist organizations such as Hezbollah that could increase its destabilising activities throughout the region. 'Never Again' informs me that serving as a light unto the nations entails that we are humanity's conscience and vocal for all that are threatened with genocide. As a result, my Judaism informs my humanity and vice-versa! A secondary geo-strategic level is that a country that conducts genocide will by necessity drive it to being totalitarian at home and expansionist abroad to the point that dynamics in the South China Seas can rapidly escalate into World War 3. The expansionism comes in the form of taking over Hong Kong, threatening Taiwan, increasing claims in the South China Seas, predatory lending that underpins the Belt Road Initiative and subjugates foreign nations and underpins China's bid to become more interconnected with the world, IP theft, 5G to amass foreign data and currency manipulation. The problem is that as Western governments seeks Chinese investments and Western businesses, and investors have a huge appetite to access China's vast market that we are inextricably tied to due to globalization. As a result, there is little political will to confront China's human rights abuses. The post WWII international system will be reshaped by China and our political and economic systems will dramatically evolve as we compete for economic or technological supremacy. This will affect the lives of developed and developing nations alike.

Q: Prior to setting up Strategic Intelligencia for 5 years you were a Middle East Director and Associate Fellow at RUSI. What did that involve?

A: The work was varied. We conducted research and analysis on strategic security issues that led to my publishing articles and reports, offering insights on the media, debriefing ministers and international policymakers, participating in FCO security risk workshops that focused on overcoming operational challenges and promote humanitarian security in conflict zones, and arranging policy forums and conferences. One such conference was 'Palestinian Statehood: Security Implications for the Region' attended by Israeli, Palestinian, US and EU representatives that was filmed by all major media networks. At a corporate level, we conducted surveys and made risk assessments with the Middle East Association to 300 business directors and government representatives on security and regulatory barriers to entry to GCC markets. Furthermore, we assessed how corporate interests were impacted by security and terrorism risk, bribery and corruption, and organised crime groups across the GCC.

Q: Thank you Barak.



A Teapot with a difference... Linda Wolffe

We are indebted to Linda Wolffe who has brought to our attention a story of a delightful and surprising teapot. It is truly a hidden gem. It may have been created during the time of the Marranos (Catholic converts who practiced their Jewish religion in secret mainly during the Spanish Inquisition). What do you think?



1. Like a Russian doll with numerous hidden items internally, this beautifully crafted artifact is shaped like a teapot, then revealing numerous secret Judaic treasures.



2. The first item revealed is a Purim dreidel



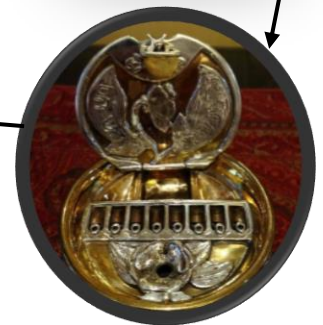
3. Then a spice box



4. Then a complete Pesach Seder setting



6. Even a minute Megillah Esther



5. Then a tiny Chanukiah



7. And even a Ner Tamid ("Everlasting light")



8. With such a perfect compact artefact, every aspect of Jewish observance is covered in this ensemble!



Prince Philip Recollections

HRH Prince Philip

Moshe and Chaya Langerman

During my post as the Economic attaché to the Israeli embassy in London I was fortunate to be invited several times to Buckingham Palace. One of these occasions was when Chaya and I had the privilege to meet HRH, the Duke of Edinburgh.

Since I joined the embassy in early 2001 it was only in 2003 when it was my turn to accompany the ambassador at the annual reception, held by her majesty and the government for the diplomatic missions based in London. Anecdotally, the event was at the end of October 2003, several weeks before we expected our fourth daughter Nillie. Naturally, it was extremely hard to find an appropriate dress that can satisfy the strict dress code (e.g. not black, long dress) for the event.

On the night of the reception, we drove our diplomatic car into Buckingham Palace and parked it in the forecourt (the one we get to see only on TV). We then entered the palace and were able to stroll around in various state rooms which are not open to the public usually. After some free time to wander around the palace, our delegation was guided to a large hall where we stood around the hall awaiting the Queen. There are various halls and delegations are allocated according to the ambassador's seniority. As our ambassador (Zvi Stauber) was only two years in his post, we were allocated in the fourth or fifth hall. That meant a long waiting time, standing as no seats are available, until the Queen and the Duke arrived at our hall. After over an hour at a complete standstill, the Queen and the Duke finally entered the hall and started shaking hands and exchanging a few words with the delegates. The Queen wore long gloves (as all guests do as well) and shaking her hands felt like a silk touch. When it was our turn, the Queen was shaking our hands and moved along quickly but the prince, who had a great sense of humour was stroking Chaya's belly and joking about the possibility of her having the baby in Buckingham palace during that evening, as he heard that Chaya was expecting any time soon. We had a good laugh with the Duke, and this was our first direct conversation with him (until the Ascot Royal Enclosure a year later).

Rest assured, we had a great time on that evening, managed to dance and drink till late and Nillie waited another 3 weeks until her safe arrival.



In 1994, Prince Philip became the first member of the British royal family to visit Israel, when he made a private pilgrimage to the Jerusalem tomb of his mother, Princess Alice, who was honoured by Israel for sheltering Jews in Nazi-occupied Greece during the Holocaust.



The Alpha Omega International Dental Society Linda Wolffe

It was December 1989 and John, and I were in the Grand Hyatt Hotel on French Hill in Jerusalem, attending our first international dental Alpha Omega meeting.

We had frequently attended clinical meetings in the UK but had never experienced more than one thousand American Jews all assembled in one room before. The noise was deafening, but there was also an atmosphere of love, warmth and genuine greeting. These regular attendees who renewed their friendships annually in large numbers to socialise, improve their clinical and management skills and plan to strengthen the Fraternity.

Most were from north America but within a couple of minutes we were taken under their wings and welcomed unreservedly. Since that day in 1989, Alpha Omega has become an integral part of our professional and personal lives.



Alpha Omega is a dental fraternity founded in 1907 by Jewish dental students at the universities of Baltimore and Philadelphia. The American fraternity system is a network of student groups throughout the USA with shared interests who work together to enhance their common concerns. Alpha Omega was formed to counter significant anti-Semitism operating in admissions policy in the dental schools in the southern USA.

Alpha Omega flourished in North America and many chapters were formed where there were at least seven dentists prepared to form a chapter. The ethos of Alpha Omega is professionalism and fraternalism founded on Judaic principles.

Alpha Omega was formed to combat discrimination so all qualified dentists in good standing are eligible for membership, but in effect the membership was and remains 99.9% Jewish. Chapters hold clinical and social meetings, help dental students during their studies and then to find work on graduation, and reach out to the less privileged in their communities with free dental treatment for those who cannot afford it, and fundraising for Jewish dental charitable projects.

The annual convention is held in the last week of December in Israel or usually the USA at a different North American city each year, where members meet in large numbers to socialise, improve their clinical and management skills and plan to strengthen the Fraternity.



The Alpha Omega International Dental Society

Linda Wolffe

Historical roots

During the Second World War and in the Mandate period before independence, dental equipment and other practical forms of help were sent to Palestine. Immediately after the establishment of the State in 1948, and with the active blessing and encouragement of Albert Einstein, Alpha Omega began serious fundraising to found the first dental school in Israel, and in 1952 construction work began in Jerusalem. The first building was in Rechov Yafo, and the School moved to its magnificent campus in Ein Karem in 1958. The Hadassah Hospital School of Dental Medicine is highly regarded throughout the world for its academic standards and its establishment is the jewel in Alpha Omega's crown. It admits 80 dental students annually for the six-year course.

During the next few years some of the lecturers from Hadassah began to teach in Tel Aviv. These lecturers lived in the Tel Aviv area and many of the students travelled to Jerusalem daily from Tel Aviv, so it seemed sensible to cut down the commuting. It became obvious that there was a demand for a second dental school in Israel, and Alpha Omega started serious fundraising again. This time we needed to raise half the funds for the Tel Aviv Dental School in Ramat Aviv as we partnered with the hugely generous Goldschlager family from Toronto.

As the demands for the two Israeli dental schools outstrip places available many Israelis have to study abroad. However, the Oral Pathology Department at Rambam Hospital in Haifa is supported by Alpha Omega, and, while there are no undergraduate students there, the postgraduate doctoral students receive credits from the European Union, which recognizes the Department as highly competent in its teaching.

Rambam has made a particular study of dental disease and treatment for patients with HIV, (many of the Ethiopian Jews who have made aliya have HIV infection and are cared for at Rambam).

The American Alpha Omega Charitable Foundation was established to maximise charitable giving through tax incentives, and three more followed to comply with tax laws in their respective countries. John is a Trustee in London, and the London Charitable Trust has raised and disbursed many hundreds of thousands of pounds.





The Alpha Omega International Dental Society

Linda Wolffe

During the post-war years Alpha Omega became increasingly influential. It appealed to a high proportion of Jewish dentists, both in general practice and in academia, offering professional advantages and social integration. The week-long annual convention is the highlight of the year when whole families attend. There are spouses' programmes, kids' camps, and the lectures and fraternity business meetings which one would expect.

The highlight of convention week is the Presidential Hospitality event. Each year Alpha Omega elects a new International President, who is treated with great esteem and respect. The President has a huge suite in the convention hotel and after the day's activities have ended, anyone who has any koach left goes to the Presidential Suite where there are drinks, snacks (as if you haven't eaten enough) and lots of sofas for kibbitzing. Old friends catch up on family news, new friendships are made, there is usually a piano, so eventually a singsong starts. The evening ends when either the hotel security staff insist that we all go to bed as there have been so many complaints from other guests about noise, or we all give up and wend our exhausted way to our own hotel rooms. By the 1960s Alpha Omega had become the second largest international dental organization. The first non-north American chapter was founded in Paris in 1967, followed by London in 1969, and soon there were chapters in other European cities, Israel, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Mexico, and Buenos Aires. The London chapter formed a partnership with the Manchester Jewish dental group which supported the Hebrew University. We have members in all parts of the UK and raise funds for dental charities, mainly in Israel. These funds mainly accrue from the sponsorship fees paid by our dental trade suppliers. We usually have a waiting list of dental manufacturers who would like to exhibit at a meeting.

Each chapter supports a local Jewish charity; the Brussels chapter funds the dental care at the Jewish old age home for residents who cannot attend a dental practice. The Jerusalem chapter is a huge supporter of Yad Sarah, and Hadassah undergraduate students now undertake all their geriatric dental training in a specially equipped surgery which Alpha Omega has built in Yad Sarah, near Har Herzl.

At the Holocaust Survivors' Program in north America Alpha Omegas volunteer their services to Shoah survivors.

The London chapter has supported the dental care of Ravenswood residents for decades. We fund a hygienist who visits, treats patients and teaches better oral hygiene.

Charitable and community efforts continue to be central to Alpha Omega's ethos. One of the best projects is the Trudie Birger Clinic in Jerusalem, called Dental Volunteers for Israel. Trudie, a Holocaust survivor arrived in Palestine as a child and vowed that she would work all her life to ensure that children would not endure suffering. She saw many children in her neighbourhood who desperately needed dental treatment which their families could not afford. She approached Alpha Omega, who gave her funds to build a dental clinic where volunteers give their time freely.



The Alpha Omega International Dental Society

Linda Wolffe

We award our Achievement Medal annually to those outstanding international scientists or organizations who have made a contribution to international dental welfare and who have distinguished themselves in their professional field. Past recipients include esteemed dental professionals, and other scientists including Albert Einstein, Jonas Salk, Albert Sabin, Ephraim Katzir, Nobel laureate Julius Axelrod, who formulated Tylenol, and organisations such as the Israeli Medical Corps and Hadassah. We also make grants to encourage further study and support undergraduates. Our annual convention always includes a local community event, and as it is often falls over the Xmas period we volunteer at a local charity – often a hospital. I well recall the day we served meals to a thousand homeless in Atlanta, and the day we distributed food parcels to the homeless in San Diego – meeting families living in their cars, as they had been evicted from their homes for non-payment of rent.

John was the second non north American International President and served in 2007, the Fraternity's centenary year. We crossed the Atlantic 13 times that year for meetings and visits to chapters, and also travelled extensively though Europe and in Israel, and it was a wonderful experience for us both.



John's Insignia of office



In recent years dentistry has become a far less popular profession amongst Jews, particularly Jewish males, and we trim our budgets accordingly. But we are seeing increasing numbers of female dentists.

Sadly, we still have to fight anti-Semitism in dentistry. Some dental schools who have refused to allow Jewish students to reschedule examinations on Shabbat, Yom Tov and Chag. At some international meetings Israelis have been refused visas to attend. At Emory University in Atlanta the Dean failed first-year Jewish students even though they had top marks in exams, and their careers were effectively ended.

In London in 2001 we welcomed 200 delegates to our Conference, 111 of whom came from north America. It proved so successful both socially and financially that we were able to donate an ambulance to Magen David Adom with the surplus funds.

John and I have gained so much from our involvement with Alpha Omega, and we have made lasting deep friendships throughout the world and we really feel that we have another family in Alpha Omega - we are all there to help each other and promote our principles of professionalism and Jewish values.

For more information, the Alpha Omega International website can be found at www.ao.org, and the London Chapter website address is www.alphaomegauk.co.uk. Feel free to support Alpha Omega – do ask your dentist when you visit if they belong to the London Chapter, and if they support our charitable work.



Hughes Syndrome

Linda Wolffe

During her **Meet MA** interview earlier this year, Linda Wolffe touched upon the tragic loss of her daughter Louise Gergel to Hughes Syndrome or "sticky blood".

- ✚ 0.5% of population suffer from Hughes Syndrome
- ✚ 500,000 to 1,000,000 British Adults have APS (known as Hughes Syndrome)
- ✚ More common than Leukaemia or Multiple Sclerosis
- ✚ 1 In 5 young stroke victims result from Hughes syndrome as do 15% of miscarriages

We are happy to draw to reader's attention the work of the Louise Gergel Foundation to see how fundraising is helping research and awareness into Hughes Syndrome – AntiPhospholipid disease ("APS").

To find out more please refer to – www.lgfellowship.org and donate online.



Louise Gergel

Louise Gergel died suddenly at the age of 32. She had been diagnosed with Antiphospholipid Syndrome. In her short life she made a huge contribution to the community by giving much of herself to people in need and projects of communal welfare. Her family wish to perpetuate her name, especially so that her son, Max, who was three when she died, may follow Louise's good example in his path through life.

If you would like to make a donation by post, please write a cheque or charity voucher payable to: "Louise Gergel Fellowship", and post to:-

The Louise Gergel Fellowship
c/o APS Support UK
(Formerly Hughes Syndrome Foundation)
The Orchard
White Hart Lane
Basingstoke
Hants RG21 4AF



Hans Globke and Israel's Dimona Nuclear Complex - an uncomfortable alliance

The trial and subsequent execution of Adolf Eichmann in Israel in 1962 was truly an international sensation. It exposed the bestiality of Nazi rule across Europe during the Second World War in the starkest terms and first-hand testimony from survivors proved as compelling as it was repugnant.

Politics is a dirty game where truth and transparency are rarely witnessed. It has now been revealed how the trial brought into very sharp relief the conflicts between international realpolitik and domestic politics within the cauldron of a trial of traumatic drama.

One active and senior participant in the Nazi regime escaped censure and was hardly mentioned at the trial. Hans Globke attended the trial merely as a witness NOT as a Defendant! We now know that delicate Israel-German relations dictated that Globke's war time record would be sidelined in the interests of a more important objective of Ben Gurion's Government.

Globke served as Chief of Staff and a trusted confidant to former conservative West German chancellor Konrad Adenauer between 1953 and 1963. But his war record was not without controversy.

Yad Vashem records that Hans Globke (1898--1973) was a German civil servant who helped write many of the anti-Jewish laws put into effect in Germany during the Nazi regime. A lawyer who never joined the Nazi Party, [his application to join the Nazi party had been refused as he had been a member of an opposition party at one time] Globke began working for the German government in 1929. In 1933 he helped draw up the emergency law that gave Hitler all-encompassing power.

In 1935 Globke helped write the draft of the first two Nuremberg Laws, which stripped the Jews of their political rights, and forbade marriages and extramarital sexual relations between Germans and Jews. As legal adviser to the Interior Ministry, Globke had helped Eichmann find a "legal" way to steal the property of German Jews.

Along with Wilhelm Stuckart, he wrote an explanation of the racial Nuremberg Laws. Later, Globke penned the laws which forced all German Jews to take on the names "Israel" or "Sarah" and gave all property belonging to concentration camp victims to the German government. During the war, Globke helped SS leader Heinrich Himmler enforce these laws all over occupied Europe.





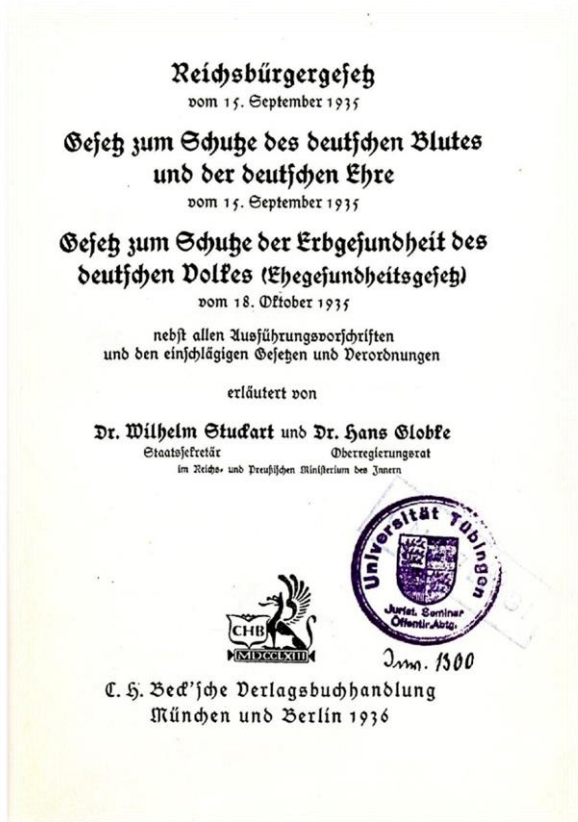
Hans Globke and Israel's Dimona Nuclear Complex - an uncomfortable alliance

After the war, Globke was not tried for his actions because he had only "gone along" with the Nazis but was never one of them. He enjoyed a high-ranking job in the German Parliament, and was consistently defended by German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, who believed Globke's claim that he had tried to lighten the anti-Jewish legislation in Germany.

In fact, Globke was secretly operating an illegal security organisation staffed by ex-Nazis within Adenauer's Government and unknown to the Chancellor.

During the 1950's Israeli Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, deeply anxious about the terrible possibility of another Holocaust, insisted on developing unconventional weaponry and was prepared to accept essential aid from any country - including West Germany.

Globke's fundamental role in funding the development of Israel's Dimona Nuclear Plant has been explored in "The Furnace and the Reactor: Behind the Scenes at the Eichmann Trial," by Ora Herman, [Hakibbutz Hameuchad-Sifriat Poalim (in Hebrew)]. The book is an important, detailed and fascinating study of the Eichmann trial.



Pictured Opposite: German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer (right) and Israel's Prime Minister David Ben Gurion at Ben Gurion's home in kibbutz Sde Boker.

Credit: GPO and Fritz Cohen





Hans Globke and Israel's Dimona Nuclear Complex - an uncomfortable alliance

The Eichmann trial was a junction where a number of key issues in the history of the state intersected. It was the preeminent Holocaust trial. Ben-Gurion, who was perfectly familiar with Globke's Nazi past, reassured a German Government emissary: "There is no need to talk about Hans Globke since Konrad Adenauer investigated his past much better than Israel could, before taking him on as his adviser".

Pictured Opposite: German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer with Secretary of State Hans Globke on March 13, 1961. **Credit:** AP



"Ben-Gurion was determined," writes author Ora Herman, "that in the Eichmann trial the nation would grapple with the tragedy of the Jewish past, but he was also equally determined that Israel would establish a system to defend itself against another Holocaust – the reactor in Dimona."

The German Government desperately feared that evidence to be given by Eichmann would incriminate current German Government ministers or senior officials. Ben Gurion had no wish to compromise his relationship with Adenauer either and as it turned out the trial sidestepped almost any reference to Globke.

Tiptoeing between the raindrops

West Germany under Konrad Adenauer, first chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany and "founding father" of the German democracy, was very helpful in the development of this weaponry – a fact that can be seen as an irony of history.

Shortly before Eichmann's capture, in March 1960, Adenauer and Ben-Gurion met in New York. He promised Ben Gurion an annual loan of DM 200 million (about \$48 million at the time, equivalent to about \$394 million today) for 10 years "via an initial project that is already prepared" – delicately hinting at the reactor in Dimona.

Pictured Opposite: Dimona Nuclear reactor complex





Hans Globke and Israel's Dimona Nuclear Complex - an uncomfortable alliance

The first part of the loan was given on August 14, 1961, one day after the end of the trial. The final approval had been given only following the appeal and the execution, on June 8, 1962, "and with reason." Herman stresses that from Adenauer's perspective there was a close connection between the aid and the trial. He demanded that the trial not hurt his country's image.

Ben-Gurion wanted to conduct the trial without damaging the delicate fabric of relations between Israel and "the different Germany." In his book "The Seventh Million: Israelis and the Holocaust" (1993, Hill & Wang), historian Tom Segev related that the prosecutor in the trial, Gideon Hausner, took an extraordinary step. He sent the Prime Minister a draft of his opening speech and Ben-Gurion demanded that he amend it to protect the image of West Germany.

Segev noted that Ben-Gurion asked Hausner to add the word "Nazi" to the word "Germany" to distinguish between Hitler's Germany and Adenauer's. Hausner claimed he rejected the Prime Minister's request that he not submit to the court documentation that implicated Globke. The legacy of this co-operation underscores Israel's determination- bolstered by its own (but never acknowledged atomic weapons capability) to confront and deter Iran and its own nuclear policy to this day.

In short, Israel has the Germans to thank for that. International politics is certainly a dirty game and one of secret compromises.

[Ed. For further information, readers can download "The Spider in the Web" a Times Podcast series]



The Spider
in the Web

Podcast Episode:

The Spider in the Web: The Hans
Globke Story (Pt 2)



Listen
& Subscribe



Magen Avot Timeline Celebrating 6 Years Julian Maurer

Celebrating 6 years since its inception back in 2015. This last year has been a major upheaval but we have met this challenge with expanded newsletters and events moved to Zoom. We are finally back in Shul and slowly getting back to pre-pandemic normality. We have had much to celebrate this last year and there is much more to look forward to. We have enjoyed welcoming back all age groups from Minis to Maxis to Y@MA and everything up from there. A fantastic line up for the year ahead with events, smachot, activities and much more. This all adds up to a bright future at Magen Avot!



Magen Avot Timeline

A United Synagogue Shul and community under the guidance of Rabbi and Sarah Kenigsberg. Celebrating 6 years since its inception.

Launch 300 adults and children join services for the launch weekend on Parashat Shelach Lecha with Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis	2015	Success After a year of impressive services, events, speakers, children's services we are off to a great start!
Moves After a number of moves (including a marquee) we finally find a semi-permanent home in Nancy Reuben.	2016	Membership We officially join the United Synagogue and the Rabbi Selection committee is created.
Numbers We have 170+ families with full membership of Magen Avot!	2017	Smachot We have held many smachot (Bar/Bat Mitzvahs/Auf tufs) with many more to come!
Ethos Maintaining our ethos with quiet services and a community united in prayer backed up by our first Rabbi and Rabbetzen!	2017	Donations We are grateful to those in our community who contribute with donations and time.
Y@MA Our youth project headed by Elliot Berke is launched for Year 7 youth upwards.	2018	Covid-19 A challenging year for everyone but one where we adapted and provided events by Zoom!
WE ARE OPEN	2018	WE ARE OPEN
	2019	
	2019	
	2019	
	2020	
	2021	



Online Uyghur Conference MA to lead major conference Fiona Taylor

Magen Avot's Uyghur Support Conference- 11th July 2021.

The Uyghurs are a Turkic Muslim people (like Kazakhs & Uzbeks), who have lived in north-west China for over 1000 years. They call their ancient homeland East Turkistan, which is also the modern Xinjiang area.

Since 2014, Uyghurs in Xinjiang have been affected by extensive controls and restrictions which the Chinese government has imposed upon their religious, cultural, economic and social lives. In Xinjiang, the Chinese government has expanded police surveillance to watch for signs of "religious extremism" that include owning books about Uyghurs, growing a beard, having a prayer rug, and have installed cameras in the homes of some private citizens. Uyghur Muslims are made to drink alcohol and eat pork. Thousands of mosques and burial grounds have been destroyed.

In addition, up to 3 million Uyghurs are detained in mass detention camps, termed "re-education camps", aimed at changing the political thinking of detainees, their identities, and their religious beliefs. They face truly terrible treatment, torture, slave labour, organ harvesting and murder. The camps are linked to a forced labour programme which supplies many international brands.

Critics of China's treatment of Uyghurs have accused the Chinese government of propagating a policy of Sinicization in Xinjiang in the 21st century, calling this policy an ethnocide or a genocide.

The Chief Rabbi has spoken out passionately against these atrocities early on, as did the Board of Deputies, which has organised events in Parliament in support of Uyghur human rights. World Jewish Relief has recently fundraised for this cause and their Chairman Henry Grunwald OBE QC will be joining us. For a long time, governments in the west took no notice or did not feel able to act against China, however, slowly, governments are beginning to take action. The US Administration, and the parliaments of Canada and the Netherlands have now recognised the atrocities against the Uyghurs as genocide and crimes against humanity. On 22 March, the UK parliament voted on a Genocide Amendment to the Trade Bill which is another welcome step. Some companies are also changing their policies as they become acutely aware of adverse publicity.

Magen Avot has formed its own ad hoc Group to take action on behalf of the Uyghur people and inform others about this cause and on Sunday 11th July 2021 from 6 pm – 9pm we will be convening and hosting a major on-line Conference to highlight the plight of the Muslim Uyghurs.

The Conference will attract key speakers including MP's, faith leaders including the Chief Rabbi, Uyghur activists, journalists and experts in this field who will share their opinions and knowledge.

The Key sessions will cover:-

- The Ethical and Moral imperative to speak out
- The Political background and how we can take effective political action
- Practical action at the consumer level- can we as retail consumers influence the supply chain for well-known branded goods produced under slave labour conditions.

Each session will be followed by Q&A discussion time.

Apart from other Ughur Support Groups, we will be joined by other local Shuls and the wider UK Jewish community within the United Synagogue (who will platform the Event), Board of Deputies and the Jewish press who will hopefully sponsor it. It will be broadcast across the UK and abroad on various platforms including Youtube.

This important path-finding event is attracting wonderful speakers and is eagerly anticipated. We expect strong communal support from Magen Avot, and we know there will be interest well beyond Hendon.

Further details will appear in the newsletter nearer the time.



Chessed Committee Update Shoina Kass

During the past year during the Covid-19 crisis the Chessed Committee has been busily involved in delivering weekly food parcels to members of the shul who have been shielding.

Fortunately, there has not been an overwhelming demand for this service. The food parcels are organised by the United Synagogue and will continue until the government guidelines lift the lockdown completely.

The Chessed Committee is there for anyone who may need help with food deliveries, weekly shopping or meals.

We are here to help so please contact one of the following people in complete confidence for any help that is required:-

- Rebbetzen Sarah Kenigsberg on 07521 500 298
- Shoina Kass on 07932 048 360
- David Berke on 07854 933 325
- Cecil Taitz on 07768 763 319

Magen Avot
The Mental Health Service for our Community

Jami
The Mental Health Service for our Community

Shielding? Isolating?
Have some questions? just looking for help?
Each week in the Zoom times feel better.

Family Zoom Havdalah

Magen Avot Pulling Together
To beat COVID-19

Zoom
Alone? Anxious? Worried? Or simply in need of someone to talk to?
We are here to support you whether religious or not, we are part of the community. We listen and your call is kept confidential. Call us today. Your name.

JEWISH HELPLINE
0800 652 9249
020 3096 2875

PLEASE contact
Rebbetzen Sarah Kenigsberg
07521 500 298
rebbetzen@magenavot.com

MagenAvot.com | facebook.com/MagenAvot | @MagenAvot



Nachat News

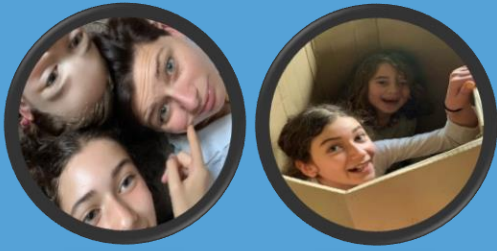
From last year and looking forward

Julian Maurer

We wish the following members and their families a huge Mazal Tov on their simcha and look forward to celebrating with them in the near future. We apologise in advance for any mistakes or omissions in the table below. Mazal Tov's taking place after printing will be released in the weekly newsletter.

NO	DATE	TYPE OF SIMCHA	MAZAL TOV TO	MAZAL TOV ALSO TO
1	15/03/20	Baby Grandson	Itamar Greenberg	Shira and Yair Halberstadt Julia and Daniel Greenberg
2	April 2020	Baby Granddaughter	Naava Leigh	Natan and Ilana Leigh Simon and Tina Leigh
3	May 2020	Bar Mitzvah	Evyatar Shenny	Ilana and Zvi Shenny Joy and Mel Kay
4	16/05/20	Baby Grandson	Baby Morris	Yael and David Morris Emilie and [the late] Saul Morris
5	16/05/20	Bat Mitzvah	Micol Spizzichino	Sara and Marco Spizzichino
6	July 2020	Baby Granddaughter	Ariella Taitz	Jason and Liza Taitz Cecil and Marian Taitz
7	July 2020	Baby Grandson	Charlie Palmer	Gabriella and Steven Palmer Simon and Tina Leigh
8	04/07/20	Bat Mitzvah	Eliana Adler	Patti and Elkan Adler
9	July 2020	Twin Grandsons	Baby Boys	Joan and Julian Pollard
10	01/08/20	Bar Mitzvah 1	Rafi Berke	David and Shelley Berke
11	Aug 2020	Baby Grandson	Baby Boy	Joan and Julian Pollard
12	22/07/20	Baby Girl/Granddaughter	Mia Rose Perahia	Judith and Ben Perahia Vivienne Kesztenbaum
13	Sep 2020	Baby Granddaughter	Baby Girl	Joe and Adina Landsberg Polly and Tony Artman
14	Sep 2020	Baby Grandson	Freddie Leigh	Joseph and Ilana Leigh Simon and Tina Leigh
15	Oct 2020	Baby Grandson	Moshe Taitz	Lee and Yael Taitz Cecil and Marian Taitz
16	Oct 2020	Baby Grandson	Baby Boy	Chaim and Gila Golker Joey and Judy Joseph
17	Oct 2020	Baby Granddaughter	Baby Girl	Rabbi Uriel and Jessica Debson Shoina and David Kass
18	Oct 2020	Bat Mitzvah	Neriah Shenny	Ilana and Zvi Shenny Joy and Mel Kay
19	21/10/20	Bar Mitzvah	Avika Katz	Yisroel-Meir and Rochel Katz Joan and Julian Pollard
20	Oct 2020	Engagement	Racheli Baum	Simon and Aliza Baum Michael and Susan Storfer
21	Nov 2020	Baby Great-Grandson	Baby Boy	Sholom and Rivky Sandler Shoina and David Kass
22	Jan 2021	Baby Granddaughter	Baby Girl	Yocheved and Avi Joseph Joey and Judy Joseph
23	Jan 2021	Engagement	Hannah Leigh	Simon and Tina Leigh
24	09/01/21	Bat Mitzvah	Abigail Morris	Harriet and Richard Morris
25	Mar 2021	Baby Grandson	Baby Boy	Jessica and Ben Finger Sharon and Jonathan Faith
26	April 2021	Baby Grandson	Eliezer Abrahams	Daphne and Adam Abrahams Angela and Mike Abrahams
27	April 2021	British Citizenship	Andrei Cosnicean	Our regular security guard
28	08/05/21	Bar Mitzvah	Ryan Newgrosh	Anthony and Samantha Newgrosh
29	22/05/21	Eshet Chayil	Karina Katz	Ashley, Joey and Minna Katz
30	26/06/21	Bat Mitzvah	Fay Abrahams	Darren and Anouk Abrahams
31	10/07/21	Bat Mitzvah	Maayan Maurer	Esther and Julian Maurer
32	24/07/21	Bar Mitzvah 2	Rafi Berke	David and Shelley Berke
33	31/07/21	Aliyah Kiddush	Joy and Mel Kay	Family Kay
34	TBC	Chattanim Kiddush	David Berke Julian Maurer	Shelley Berke Esther Maurer





Home Schooling in Lockdown

Harriet Sloane

I never wanted to be a teacher, I recognised early on I had neither the aptitude nor patience to be of any use to anyone in a classroom; and yet for large periods of 2020 and 2021 that's what many of us became. Those of us who were not skilled enough to explain why 2 plus 2 equals 4 with anything more insightful than "because it just does" were given the reigns to try to teach (or at least supervise the absorption of) a varied and challenging syllabus to our children.

Now, I have to confess I cried most of the way through lockdown 1, but we'd mastered Google Classroom, Zoom, and Teams so surely we could cope with a few more weeks of muddling through. But somehow this one felt different, more permanent, the eldest was now in secondary school and the "Blitz Spirit" that had fuelled the adrenalin to see us through the first lockdown had worn off; even the sourdough starter was looking a little green, long forgotten at the back of the fridge.

Whilst it's been widely reported that home schooling responsibilities have had a significantly negative impact on women in the UK, Richard did muck in. He is a far more patient person than me and his ability to explain maths concepts with anything more than a shrug of the shoulder and a curt "because google said so" was definitely of benefit.

Even though both our girls had live lessons all day during lockdown 3 it was still a strain, a constant juggle and a physical and emotional struggle at times. Some of the challenges were big - trying to teach, oversee and support the girls whilst managing a full-time job with a particular love of meetings and running the household felt relentless and, at times, overwhelming. My eldest quickly worked out she need only to get dressed from the waist up, spun the school some story about her laptop not working on Teams and I was fighting an uphill battle to get my youngest to stay in front of her laptop past 2pm, whilst the perpetual state of mess and chaos in the house meant the background to any Zoom call resembled the kitchen in "The Young Ones"; sometimes complete with sound effects.

Then there were the silly things, which at times felt equally overwhelming and insurmountable - the girls' breaks and lunches were at different times, and coordinating those, alongside back to back meetings, finding enough time to clear away breakfast, set up lunch, and think about dinner (not to mention elevensies, after school snacks, or other random meals that I'm sure don't exist anywhere outside of lockdown) was a military feat nearly complex and continuous enough to make me at least *think* about writing an angry email, and the printer still hadn't recovered from being asked to do so much work from the first time around.

And then there were the unhelpful feelings of guilt that my kids were behind because of our inadequacy as teachers.

There were positives too, at times I've had to dig pretty deep to find them and deeper still to remember them during some of those really dark days, but there were definitely some. Before I would see the girls for about 10 minutes each morning and come home quite often after they were in bed, but being at home meant we had the space to have real conversations, share thoughts and opinions, challenge each other to think a bit differently. Or just dance around the kitchen with a cabbage as a homemade puppet (ok that was more me than them).

And we've really had to be role model positive behaviours all day every day, not just the obvious ones like how we talk to people and how we treat each other which I'd like to think we do anyway, but also how we look after our mental and physical health, talk about our feelings, and deal with stress. I'm not saying we always got it right, she writes typing this at 11pm, but we have definitely been much more aware of setting the right examples and that's had a real beneficial effect on all of us.

Oh and the dog! Probably the biggest surprise to us all, especially to the long-suffering teacher who had to request pupils remember to leave their various pets outside the zoom classroom after logging in to be greeted by 6 girls, 4 cats, 5 dogs and more animal noise than you'd get in even the rowdiest version of "Old Macdonald".

I would also love to include my newfound patience, ability to explain things, or skills as a teacher as accidental and surprising benefits of the lockdown schooling era, but alas that would be absolutely untrue. I can't summarise the time as being anything other than challenging, but I also don't want to lose sight of some of the positives that will well outlast the pandemic; I hope.



Youth News

Elliot Berke – Y@MA Youth Director

Since moving online in March 2020, the youth have engaged in various activities in weekly sessions on Wednesday evenings, including learning, games, quizzes and debates.

We have enjoyed a successful online Q&A with Rabbi Kenigsberg in which the youth have had their trickiest questions and queries answered.

Over Purim, the youth received Y@MA Mishloach Manot, and enjoyed a Purim extravaganza of activities and games with prizes.

The youth also contributed Divrei Torah to a booklet sent out over Pesach.

We now look forward to continuing in Shul being back together in person which restarted in mid-April (Tazria-Metzora).





Shavuot Recipe

Chocolate Cheesecake Cupcakes

Penina Ehreich

These are really moist and super easy to make. I like that they are in individual portions so you can take out as many as you may need from the freezer and you don't need to cut them like you would a cake. I got this recipe from Faigy, a baking friend.

In a bowl mix

- ✚ 1 1/2 Cups Plain (all purpose) Flour
- ✚ 1 Cup Sugar
- ✚ 1/4 Cup Cocoa @cadburyuk
- ✚ 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- ✚ 1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- ✚ 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Slowly beat in

- ✚ 1/3 Cup Oil
- ✚ 1 Cup Milk

Share the batter evenly between your cupcake cases filling them up halfway. I use fairy cake cases and got about 25.

To make the cheese mixture beat together for about 1 minute

- ✚ 1 x 8oz tub JJ whipped cream cheese @kosherkingdomuk (or similar)
- ✚ 1/3 Cup Sugar
- ✚ 1 egg

Drop a teaspoon of the cheese mixture into the chocolate filled cases.

Bake in a preheated oven on 180°C/350F for 15-30 minutes depending on the size of cases you are using. You can use a toothpick to check it is baked through.

Cool on a wire rack. Freezes well. Enjoy!
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Penina Ehreich

Simplifying cooking with recipes, tips and techniques



Kid's Corner

Story for Magen Maxis

Ruth Ereich

Hi everyone! As you all know, when בני ישראל were on their way to ארץ ישראל, they stopped at סניי to be given the תורה. They knew there would be lots of מצוות to learn about, so they didn't know what the laws of eating milk and meat together would be. So, they decided to only prepare milky foods.

Yenta's Test

ה' sometimes gives us hard things to do to see if we can manage to do them. And if we pass the test ה' will be very pleased with us! Yenta Tchanovitch always had lots of guests and was looking forward to שבועות. She knew she would have 15 people including her own and her daughter's family, but it's still 2 hours and 4 minutes before candle lighting and she is ready and organised as usual. She's adding the fresh cream and grated cheese to a large saucepan of the family's famous onion soup that was bubbling away on the hob and everything else is done.

Then the phone rings: "Rabbanit Tchanovitch, help me! I beg you! My next-door neighbour Mrs Melman has gone into hospital to have her baby and Mr Melman has gone with her. They were supposed to eat with Mr Melman's parents, but something has gone wrong, and they can't have the children after all. "Could they all come to your house for meals?" "Of course!" Yenta is already thinking how she can stretch the food for another 7 kids for 3 meals! She's made enough for 15, but she's sure she can manage to cook some more food before שבועות begins. Yenta always says "yes" to guests. But before she starts cooking, the phone rings again. "Rabbanit Tchanovitch, Help! Something terrible has happened! Can you have the Simboli children for Shabbos? Just the younger ones who aren't in Yeshiva." That's another 5 people to feed. So far, a total of 27 people for each meal making a total of 54 people needing to eat. She's about to cook even more food when the phone rings again. "Ok! They are welcome! We'll manage!" (although Yenta isn't sure how!) But she always says "yes" to guests. If she gives smaller portions to everyone, maybe there will be enough. She gets down to more cooking but....

She just has time to put down the phone when it rings again. "Mummy, I'm coming home for Shavuot! And can I bring 3 friends with me for?" That's her daughter Sorele phoning from Sem! "Of course, darling!" That'll be another 4 guests for each meal making a total of 31 people for each meal meaning 62 meals altogether. Yenta looks at her saucepan wondering what she can add to stretch it. How on earth is she going to manage? And there's not much time left! But there is no one like Yenta! She fills her big kettle and waits for it to boil. She makes herself a cup of coffee and a piece of chocolate cake. She watches from her balcony and sees everyone is already dressed in white for שבועות.

The phone rings. It's her husband. "Yenta, Shmerel and Berel have nowhere to go for meals!" Yenta always says "yes" to guests! She takes a sip of coffee. There is still half an hour till Shavuot. She closes her eyes. She says: "Please ה' help me! I know You are testing me, but I simply can't pass this test! I simply don't have enough food! It's too late! So, I need You. I trust You. You can handle it! I thank You for understanding that I can't pass this test alone! The doorbell rings. "It's open" she calls. Mrs Simcha Aranovitch is standing there holding an enormous dish of lasagne with her daughter Rosala holding a full tray of nibbles. "Please Yenta, do me a favour. I've made this huge lasagne and in the last minute my daughter and her 8 children can't come! Can you use it? Shame to see it being wasted!" Rosala puts down the tray of food and the tray of nibbles. **חג שמח!**"

The next minute the doorbell rings again. "It's open!" Malhala Eisenblat, the areas favourite "Grandma" is standing there with the most enormous strawberry cheesecake. "I have guests coming for יום טוב and one of the guests has brought exactly the same cake! I really don't want to waste it! Can you use it?" Yenta Tchanovitch finishes her chocolate cake. The doorbell rings. Three teenage girls are standing there with bags of fruit, and the hugest pot of Hagen Das ice cream than she has ever seen! "We're Sorele's guests from Sem. We've brought these for Shavuot!"

And that's how all the guests had the best שבועות meals ever. And Yenta passed her test!

It's one minute before יום טוב. She raises her eyes to heaven and thanks Hashem!

I wish you all the best שבועות ever!



Book Review Daniel Greenberg Reviewed by Julian Pollard

In his novel ***A Tale of Two Rabbis-Faith and Fraud*** (available at Amazon and all other reputable online book retailers) our own Daniel Greenberg explores the juxtaposition of two conflicting worlds- that of a charedi community of north London and that of the local authority housing benefits system.

As he recently explained to an online audience this novel was prompted by events of some ten years ago when he personally became disenchanted (and worse) with the charedi community's engagement with the secular world as well as with its co-religionists. Primarily aimed at a Jewish readership this novel is equally accessible by the wider community and footnotes clarify words or phrases which may not be familiar.

The reader is immediately thrust into the Yeshiva environment as we witness through the eyes of a student how a major housing benefit fraud is undertaken (in some cases unwittingly) by the Yeshiva teachers one of whom is innocent and naive but is framed in conspiracy with the local police as the plot unfolds.

To what extent the author uses the storyteller as a cipher for his own perspective is unclear, but some early comments may be thought revealing. Thus, the yeshiva world is said to preserve complacency and contentment "by repeated assertions of superiority by comparison with the rest of the world". The urge for exhausting study into the night is said to result more from dangerous peer pressure than spiritual commitment and a bravado to see who can stay up the latest at night. Moreover, we are told that "guilt" accounts for the majority of the student's spiritual experiences during his years in Yeshiva. The innocent teacher is often distracted from reality by flights of parable whimsy as stories of saintly Rabbis of old are expounded to his eager mentee.

At nearly 500 pages this novel is an easy read, and the author speaks with authority and knowledge about a world only rarely explored by British authors. It is perhaps especially topical as the insular and often misunderstood psyche of our own Charedi Londoners has come under close scrutiny during the Covid pandemic.

It is undoubtedly the case that some of the characters in this novel are unappealing –even objectionable – and this may resonate with some readers who will recall the widespread public opprobrium recently heaped upon those flaunting lockdown rules with weddings, parties, forged covid jab certificates etc. Equally we recall the passing of a well-known Charedi leader who despite house-to-house pleas to his flock to follow the rules was often ignored and himself succumbed to Covid. This novel provides a timely insight into a community whose mores and ethics can perhaps be better understood if not universally admired.

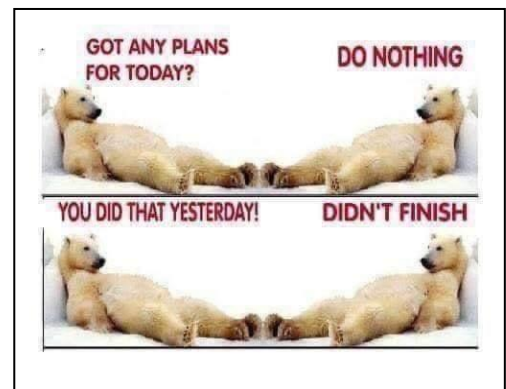


You're having a laugh... Humour during lockdown



To my Jewish friends: They are advising not to allow Elijah into your home during the seder. He's visited too many other families.

Apparently we can't daven with a minyan but can view properties, so my house is on the market.
Viewing times are
8:30am
7pm
10:30pm



**JEWISH IRONY ;
PASSOVER CANCELLED
BECAUSE OF A PLAGUE.**



**My thoughts go out to all the married men all over the world who have told their wives, "I'll do that when I have time".
Time's up dudes 😂😂**

i am having a serious problem social distancing from my fridge.

DUE TO THE DEADLY NATURE OF COVID-19 WE WILL NOT BE ALLOWING MORE THAN 8 PATIENTS INTO THE PHARMACY AT ANY ONE TIME

PLEASE ALSO KEEP A SAFE DISTANCE OF 6 FEET BETWEEN YOURSELF AND ANYONE ELSE INSIDE THE PHARMACY

PLEASE BARE WITH US AT THIS DIFFICULT TIME, THIS IS FOR THE PROTECTION OF OUR PATIENTS, STAFF AND COMMUNITY ALIKE

Marc Ovits would like to thank Magen Avot

Rabbi and Rebetzen Kenigsberg, the Gabbaim, the Board of Management and all its Shulgoers for their tireless efforts to build such a warm, welcoming, and inclusive Shul. May all the community be blessed with good health, smachot and much nachat from all their families!



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